

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah An-Nisa

although there is no surah in the Quran titled "men", the women have been honoured with this Surah which means "the women". The women have been given the best status in Islam and men have been appointed to care for them and to provide for all their needs. The first order for a man when he marries a woman is to give her some gift:

وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً {4}

At the time of marriage, give the women their dowries willingly as an obligation

Before Islam women were treated like animals and had no rights at all. But Islam honoured them by giving them their due share in the inheritance:

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ
الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا {7}

Men will have a share in what their parents and their near relatives leave; and women will have a share in what their parents and their near relatives leave: whether it be a little or much, they shall be legally entitled to their shares

And then there is the following ayat in which Allah is reminding men of their duty to take care of their wives even if they don't like them. In it there is a great lesson that often we dislike things but Allah puts unbelievable benefit in them if we do sabar for His sake:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ
 اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا {19}

Treat them with kindness even if you dislike them; it is quite possible that you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good.

One ayat that follows shortly after this topic is the one that touches the innermost problem of a majority of people...envying others of whatever they possess.....

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا
 اكْتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَتَبْنَ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ
 بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا {32}

Do not envy that Allah has given some of you more than the others. Men will be rewarded according to their deeds and women will be rewarded according to theirs. Ask Allah for His grace. Surely Allah has perfect knowledge of everything.

So this is the secret of happiness and peace of mind.....Don't wish for what others have but ask Allah of His bounties...He might have an even better thing for you.....trust Allah and don't get carried away by your desires!

And next what an eye-opener for all those who think they are perfect and free of all evil, especially who adorn a superficial cloak of piety

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ
 فَتِيلًا {49}

Have you not seen those who speak very highly of their own purity? In fact, Allah purifies whom He wishes. And no injustice - even equal to the thread of a date-stone - is being done to them.

Earlier in surah Fatihah, we asked Allah to guide us to the path of those with whom Allah was pleased. The following ayat made me so happy that if we obey Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w) then Allah will give us the company of these blessed people:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالشّٰهَدَاءِ وَالصّٰلِحِيْنَ وَحَسُنَ اُولَئِكَ رَفِيْقًا {69}

Whosoever obeys Allah and the Rasool will be in the company of those whom Allah has blessed - the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous: What excellent companions they will be

Today as more and more people are falling in love with their self created worlds of luxuries, the fear of death has increased. How clearly the Quran makes us see the absurdity of our over-protective measures

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ {78}

As for death, no matter where you may be, death is going to reach you even if you are in fortified towers.

It is mostly this fear, of loss of wealth and loss of life, which prevents people from having the courage to do Jihad for Allah's sake. In the following Ayat Allah promises great rewards for all who strive for His sake even if they failed to reach their objectives and met death before they reached their destination.

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَآغِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ
يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {100}

He who emigrates in the path of Allah shall find numerous places of refuge in the Earth and abundant resources. He who leaves his home to migrate for Allah and His Rasool and dies on the way, his reward becomes due and sure with Allah. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

The concept that all evil thought is from shaitan is something that was totally new for me and I wonder how we spend our lives without knowing this basic fact. We keep on moving away from Allah's religion and we think "it is my interpretation of life" or "this is what I believe" never giving it any doubt

because the more we are ignorant about Allah and Prophet and Quran the more ignorant we are about the shaitan.

يَعِدُّهُمْ وَيُمْنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا {120}

Shaitan makes promises to stir up in them false desires; but Shaitan makes them promises only to deceive them.

What a blessing it is to trust Allah who knows it all and then tells you who is your enemy and how he works against you and how to prevent it. How beautiful is the concept of surrender!! So easy for some and so unthinkable for the unfortunate ones:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا {125}

Who has a better Deen (way of life or religion) than the one who is a Muslim (submits himself entirely) to Allah, does good to others and follows the faith of Ibrahim (Abraham) the upright one, whom Allah chose to be His friend?

This is what we should all desire....the friendship and love of Allah. Can anything be more desirable than this honour? We remember Ibrahim (a.s) as the friend of Allah but how many times did we try to follow his example in our own life? We have lost sight of these real ideals and have replaced them with other role models. Thus there is a constant frustration and anxiety.

The following ayat highlights the misery of our times.....complaints, complaints, complaints. Having all the facilities, sitting in air-conditioned cars, wearing the most expensive clothes, eating luxurious food in grand dining halls of our royal houses, what do our conversations revolve around ? COMPLAINTS - complaints against people, against the weather, against inflation, against schools, jobs, trafficeverything. And we don't even feel ashamed of *gheebat* or backbiting. It's a standard way of talking - stripping people of their reputation and their dignity by voicing all the grudges that we have in our hearts.

Allah says except for one who has been wronged it is simply not acceptable to give voice to such things:

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوِّءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا
{148}

Allah does not like evil words to be uttered except by someone who is truly wronged.
Allah hears all and knows all

Instead we should think about doing good to erase the bad and learn to forgive. After all, this is what we would like for ourselves. As a saying goes "don't find fault, find a remedy".

Allah says:

إِنْ تَبَدُّوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخَفُّوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا
{149}

If you do good deeds openly or in private or forgive an evil, then surely Allah is Pardoning, Powerful.

Next we move on to a most important part of our faith, which is the belief in the Prophets. Because you will hear most so called educated people saying that only to believe in Allah is enough. But the Quran puts a stop to all these controversies by stating in the most powerful tone:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا
{150}

أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا {151}

Those who deny Allah and his Rasool and *those who* intend to draw a line between Allah and His Rasools saying: "We believe in some, and reject the rest" - desiring to take a

middle way between belief and unbelief - these are the real unbelievers and We have prepared for such unbelievers a humiliating punishment.

The Quran often addresses the whole mankind and shows Allah's love and mercy for all. When non-muslims read these words "O people" or "O mankind" it makes them feel that Allah's book is for them too and not just for born muslims. In the following ayat Allah is telling the people of the world that just as the Quran has been revealed for all, similarly the Prophet (s.a.w.) was also sent for the entire mankind and thus they should all believe in him. And this belief will only be for their own good. It doesn't alter Allah's Supremacy at all because we all belong to him anyway just as the whole universe belongs to Allah.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ
تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا
{170}

O mankind! The Rasool has brought you the Truth from your Rabb, so believe in it, it is for your own benefit. If you disbelieve, then you should know that to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth. Allah is the Knowledgeable, Wise

Disbelief in Allah is like a disease which eats away at the soul of a person because you are depriving yourself from your most important need. Without the deep bond of trust and obedience to Allah, you will always be in a state of anxiety. In this world people might build up a lot of material success to hide themselves from the truth but Allah's mercy and blessings will only be for the believers:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ
وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمًا {175}

Now those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him, Allah will soon cover them with His mercy and grace and will show them the Right Way to Himself.

May Allah make us one of those fortunate people who are blessed by Allah and are guided to the straight path which leads to the ultimate and complete success of both worlds. Ameen.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
Surah Al-Furqan

Surah begins with an absolutely gorgeous Ayat, in which Allah has used just a few words, to tell us about Himself, as well as His Prophet (s.a.w) His Book, and the purpose of this message. Allah reminds us that the actual purpose of the Quran is to teach us to distinguish between the good and the bad, between truth and falsehood, between light and darkness, between success and failure.

This is why Allah has called it, Al-Furqan : The criterion.

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا {1}

Blessed is He Who sent down the Furqan upon His servant that he may be a Warner to the nations;

Allah says that He revealed this magnificent Quran on His slave, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) so that he might be a "Warner" for the whole world. It means that the study of Quran is incomplete without the Sunnah of the Prophet. His whole life was a live interpretation of the Quran. Therefore, Allah has reminded us of the importance of following the footsteps of our Prophet (s.a.w), in numerous verses throughout the Quran.

But to face the reality, is not a comfortable experience, and so most people prefer to stay in the semi darkness of their self-created standards of success instead of admitting the fact that there is something far more superior than their own principles of life and that is the Quran, the Al-Furqan sent by Allah himself, who is the OWNER of the skies and the earth. Is there anyone equal to Him?

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا {2}

He, Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and Who did not take to Himself a son, and Who has no associate in the kingdom, and Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure.

When the people of Makkah could not find fault with the glorious Quran, they resorted to a campaign of negative propaganda against the Prophet(s.a.w)

وَقَالُوا مَالِ هَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونَ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا {7}

And they say: What is the matter with this Messenger that he eats food and goes about in the markets; why has not an angel been sent down to him, so that he should have been a Warner with him?

Allah says that it is not something extraordinary. All the other messengers were also Human beings. If Allah had sent an angel then how could we have taken him as a role model? Then these people would have said that how could they follow an angel when he doesn't have the same needs or problems like us human beings.

Allah says that those who deny the truth are actually the ones who are arrogant and that is why they come up with outrageous arguments like this:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَى رَبَّنَا لَقَدِ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا {21}

And those who do not hope for Our meeting, say: Why have not angels been sent down upon us, or (why) do we not see our Lord? Now certainly they are too proud of themselves and have revolted in great revolt.

They don't realize that when the Angels will appear, it will be the hour of judgment:

{22} يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا

On the day when they shall see the angels, there shall be no joy on that day for the guilty, and they shall say: It is a forbidden thing totally prohibited.

And the following Ayat shows the pathetic helplessness that will be faced by all those who did no preparation for that day:

{23} وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنْثُورًا

And We will proceed to what they have done of deeds, so We shall render them as scattered floating dust.

Allah says, that will be the Day of Regrets when people will be so devastated to realize that they had wasted their lives away in useless pursuits, when they should have gone along Allah's Messenger (s.a.w) Look at how Allah has portrayed their anger at themselves:

{27} وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا

And the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands saying: O! would that I had taken a way with the Messenger

And on that day when all the veils of illusions will be removed from their eyes, they will have another great regret:

{28} يَا وَيْلَتَىٰ لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا

O woe is me! would that I had not taken such a one for a friend !

Why? What did the friend do? What is so tragic in having a certain friend? The next Ayat reveals it to us:

{29} لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَذُولًا

Certainly he led me astray from the reminder after it had come to me; and the Shaitan fails to aid man.

Now we need to think upon this. It is not something as trivial as we have taken it to be. Friends have the most profound effect on our thoughts and ideas about life. Unknowingly and unconsciously, a person follows the religion of his friend. So if you want to judge the level of your faith, take a good look at your friends. Whom do you like to spend your time with? Who makes you feel good? Because eventually your friends are your destiny.....
The next Ayat is one that really touches my heart and fills me with a deep sorrow. Just read it and feel the truth of its words:

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا {30}

And the Messenger cried out: O my Lord! surely my people have treated this Quran as a forsaken thing.

We Muslims take the concept of intercession very lightly and think that we can live the way we want to and then of course on the Day of Judgment our Prophet will intercede for us. See what Allah is telling us here. There is such sadness in the words of the Prophet, "O my Lord, my people had forsaken the Quran" We need to look at ourselves carefully. Is he talking about us? Look at how the Quran is being treated; as a book of magic. We read it when someone is sick, we read it if we want something done, or when someone dies.....end of story. And then we say we are Muslims?! We can get away with this attitude in this world but just think what justification will we have on that day of recompense? What a self deprived nation we are that we have such a wonderful treasure of knowledge and guidance in the form of Quran, that can make us into the most advanced people of the world, only if would learn it and establish it into our life structure, but we have squandered it away and now, we have become the most despised nation.
But after all what is it that has so blinded us that we cannot see the truth? Admit it or not, it is our desires..... And the following Ayat proves it:

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا {43}

Have you seen him who takes his low desires for his god? Will you then be a protector over him?

Notice the contempt in Allah's words.....Look at these fools they are worshipping their desires and they think they are following their ideologies? Giving fancy names doesn't change the reality of things but they go on

deluding themselves.....who are they fooling anyway?? On surface these people look very distinguished and sophisticated so that ordinary people are so impressed by their grand styles. Allah says, "Are you taken in by their appearances?" Do you think they listen or that they understand? In Allah's eyes they are worse than cattle !

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا {44}

Or do you think that most of them do hear or understand? They are nothing but as cattle; nay, they are straying farther off from the path.

Allah is teaching us here to open our eyes and "see" the endless signs of Allah's complete control over all things. Have you noticed the shadows? How they move about? Come out of your air-conditioned houses and see something real for a change !

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا {45}

Have you not considered (the work of) your Lord, how He extends the shade? And if He had pleased He would certainly have made it stationary; then We have made the sun an indication of it

Have you pondered over the endless cycle of day and night? Doesn't it remind you of death and being born again?

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا {47}

And He it is Who made the night a covering for you, and the sleep a rest, and He made the day to rise up again.

The question arises here, how to join people with Allah? How to make them understand the purpose of their life? There is so much negative going on in the world. What can we do? Allah gives the answer in this powerful Ayat:

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا {52}

So do not follow the unbelievers, and strive against them a mighty striving with it.

Do Jihad with the Quran , which is a great Jihad. Why? Because to make the society pure from all evil and chaos is a huge task and it can only be possible by spreading the awareness of Quran. When people will recognize who their Lord is, and they will start obeying Him in all matters, only then will they learn to live peacefully and with dignity and self respect. But when you start out with this intention of spreading the Quran , there are bound to be several obstacles in the way. One of them is the opposition from people because they feel their interests are being threatened. They are rightly afraid that when people will only bow down in front of one Allah only, then who is going to tolerate exploitation of any kind? What will become of their superiority? So on one hand there is this huge task of making widespread programs of Quranic education and on the other hand the various opposing factors have to be borne with patience and perseverance. Thus Allah has so rightly named it "Jihadan Kabira": the great Jihad. You might wonder, who is going to do it and how is it possible? Allah has the answer right here !

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ وَكَفَى بِهِ بُدْئُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا
 {58}

And rely on the Ever-living Who dies not, and celebrate His praise; and Sufficient is He as being aware of the faults of His servants,

This is a great book. What an honor for an ordinary human being that Allah might chose him for serving the Quran. But surely there must be something that makes one worthy of such honors.....what are those qualities that we can acquire to become those favorites of Allah Almighty, whom he calls "Ibaad-ur-Rahman": slaves of the most beneficent (Allah)

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا
 سَلَامًا {63}

And the servants of the Beneficent Allah are they who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say: Peace.

I am filled with wonder how Allah has not mentioned any "religious" ritual and straightaway goes on to correct our carriage and speech !! And have you noticed that when we are talking to learned people, almost everyone tries to talk in a soft and pleasant tone; but when we talk to ordinary, "common" people then our style is totally different. That is where our "real" self comes out. But Allah's favorites are not double faced. They walk with dignity and humility, reflecting an inner consciousness of Allah, and the same is reflected in the way they talk.

But this is not all. They not only establish the obligatory prayers, but for them praying in the night is a form of a special contact with their Lord:

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا {64}

And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing.

What do they pray for? That they might be saved from the torment of the fire.....It shows that they are not assuming Paradise to be their birthright.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا {65}

And they who say: O our Lord! turn away from us the punishment of hell, surely the punishment thereof is a lasting

إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا {66}

Surely it is an evil abode and (evil) place to stay.

And does this mean they are ignorant in their worldly affairs? No they are wise people and spend their resources with care. No stinginess and no extravagance. Moderation is the key word here !

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا {67}

And they who when they spend, are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and (keep) between these the just mean.

And the most important thing is that doing all of this , they stay true to the worship of only one Allah. They have not associated any partners with Him, whatsoever. Neither people, nor desires, nor any "peer" or saint.

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ
وَلَا يَزْنُونَ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا {68}

And they who do not call upon another god with Allah and do not slay the soul, which Allah has forbidden except in the requirements of justice, and (who) do not commit fornication and he who does this shall find a requital of sin;

It is important to remember that good deeds alone cannot gain us any benefit, if we don't stay away from evil. But Allah is very kind, so if we commit any mistake then we should make sincere repentance, and Allah will forgive us:

وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا {71}

And whoever repents and does good, he surely turns to Allah a (goodly) turning.

Another quality of these favorites of Allah is that they stay away from falsehood, whether it's in speech or actions:

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا {72}

And they who do not bear witness to what is false, and when they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly.

Notice the other thing mentioned here that when they happen to see someone involved in foolish or useless activity, they are neither attracted nor are they aggressive, but pass by gracefully. And what a beautiful quality that when they hear the words of their Lord they don't sit there like deaf or blind.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا {73}

And they who, when reminded of the communications of their Lord, do not fall down thereat deaf and blind.

It means that the magic of the Quran moves them from inside. It penetrates their soul and they change their lives accordingly. But they know that their individual effort cannot take them far so they call out to their Lord:

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ
إِمَامًا {74}

And they who say: O our Lord! grant us in our wives and our offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us guides to those who guard (against evil).

Such are the people whom we call "lucky". And so Allah will reward them with a splendid reward, because they were patient, because they persevered, because they constantly stayed away from evil and because they were constant in their good deeds.

أُولَئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَامًا {75}

These shall be rewarded with high places because they were patient, and shall be met therein with greetings and salutations.

And this is the part which I love the most..... they will live there for ever and ever..... They strived hard in Allah's way without any deviation and their reward is also never ending !!

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا {76}

Abiding therein forever; beautiful the abode and the resting-place.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Kahf

So let's get ourselves acquainted with this beautiful Surah about which our beloved Prophet (s.a.w) once said :

"Whoever recites Surah Al-Kahf on Friday, it will be a means of light for him till the next Friday."

This Surah unveils the true reality of our world in which Allah has sent us for a limited time and sent us the Quran so that we might stay in the right perspective about everything.

The first Ayat is full of gratitude of a believer when he realizes what a blessing Allah has sent down to him: The miraculous revelation of Allah's words on the heart of His Prophet,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيَّ عَبْدَهُ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا {1}

(All) praise is due to Allah, Who revealed the Book to His servant and did not make in it any crookedness.

Next Allah tells us the purpose behind the creation of earth in the following ayaat:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا {7}

Surely We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it, so that We may try them (as to) which of them is best in works.

Take a good look around yourself.....what do you see? What are we immersed in, nowadays? "ZEENAT" : Adornment. The latest clothes, the latest shoes, the latest movies, the latest fashion..... the list goes on and on and on. And we have no time for Allah, no time for Prayer, no time for Quran. Allah is telling us that this beauty is so temporary, it's just a test to

see which of you is best in deeds. We are not even worried about attaining the minimum passing marks and Allah is talking about "ahsan" which means the best in every action and every thought, perfect in fulfilling the rights of Allah and of people.

It is important to understand here that the comforts of this world are not condemned in Islam but Allah is warning us that don't get so involved in this mad race for material progress, that you forget the hereafter. Remember all this is going to turn into dry earth:

وَأِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا {8}

And most surely We will make what is on it (earth) a bare ground without herbage.

Everything will be finished. These houses that we worship, this jewellery that we adore, everything will perish.

After this Allah relates to us the story of a few young men who renounced materialism, gave up everything and took refuge in a cave to save their Faith, when they were threatened with death from the ruler of the land, who wanted them to revert to "shirk"(polytheism). Look at their trust in Allah which is expressed in their prayer:

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا {10}

When the youths sought refuge in the cave, they said: Our Lord! grant us mercy from Thee, and provide for us a right course in our affair.

Now there is a very important point to ponder in the following two verses:

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاَهُمْ هُدًى {13}

We relate to you their story with the truth; surely they were youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance.

وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَّدْعُو مِن دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا {14}

And We strengthened their hearts with patience, when they stood up and said: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth; we will by no means call upon any god besides Him, for then indeed we should have said an extravagant thing.

We see here that they had such a strong faith, that Allah increased them in their Guidance and made their hearts strong enough to take a stand against "shirk" (polytheism). We also claim to have imaan but why are we constantly in doubts? Why doesn't our faith make our hearts strong? Why can't we come out of our fears? The problem is that we don't act upon our faith and that is why our level of Hidayat (enlightenment) is on the decline instead of being increased. Also we need to have courage for that first step.....for the first stand we take for Allah's sake and then Allah will make our hearts strong.

Allah made these young men sleep in the cave, for a number of years and then raised them again as a sign for the people of that generation:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَغَثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا
{21}

And thus did We make (men) to get knowledge of them that they might know that Allah's promise is true and that as for the hour there is no doubt about it.

Often in our lives Allah shows us signs of reality but we don't usually focus on the real issue and get distracted by useless details and thus we remain untouched and unmoved.

Our focus should be on Allah, but how do we do that? Allah tells us in this Ayat that it can be achieved through reading the Book of Allah:

وَائْتَلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ
 مُلتَحَدًا **{27}**

And recite what has been revealed to you of the Book of your Lord, there is none who can alter His words; and you shall not find any refuge besides Him.

Also be wise in the choice of your friends. The Prophet (s.a.w) said:
 "A man is on the religion of his friend."

Don't be dazzled by superficial sophistication, go for imaan , that should be our criterion in seeking a friend:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ
هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا {28}

And withhold yourself with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His goodwill, and let not your eyes pass from them, desiring the beauties of this world's life; and do not follow him whose heart We have made unmindful to Our remembrance, and he follows his low desires and his case is one in which due bounds are exceeded.

There are various distractions in this world which cause a person to be forgetful of his Lord but none so much as the trial of wealth and prosperity. Very few can remain humble and grateful towards Allah after they have been given worldly success. As is shown in the following parable in which a man was blessed with two beautiful gardens:

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ
وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زُرْعًا {32}

And set forth to them a parable of two men; for one of them We made two gardens of grape vines, and We surrounded them both with palms, and in the midst of them We made cornfields.

كَلَّمَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ آتَتْ أُكُلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلَالَهُمَا نَهْرًا {33}

Both these gardens yielded their fruits, and failed not aught thereof, and We caused a river to gush forth in their midst,

Instead of showing gratitude to Allah, this man becomes arrogant and denies the truth of the Day of Judgment:

وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَذِهِ أَبَدًا {35}

And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said: I do not think that this will ever perish

وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّدِدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا {36}

And I do not think the hour will come, and even if I am returned to my Lord I will most certainly find a returning place better than this.

He is advised by his companion to remember Allah's greatness in giving him all that he had:

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ {39}

And wherefore did you not say when you entered your garden: It is as Allah has pleased, there is no power save in Allah?

And then Allah punished him for his arrogance and he is full of regrets but it was too late then:

وَأَحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا
وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا {42}

And his wealth was destroyed; so he began to wring his hands for what he had spent on it, while it lay, having fallen down upon its roofs, and he said: Ah me! would that I had not associated anyone with my Lord.

And so we learn this very important lesson that worldly success is just a test and by no means does it mean that it is our own big achievement. Rather we should be grateful for whatever Allah has blessed us with, and try our utmost to spend it for the reward of the akhirah. As Allah says in the following Ayat:

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا
وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا {46}

Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world; and the ever-abiding, the good works, are better with your Lord in reward and better in expectation.

Why is all of this so important? Because each of our actions is being recorded and look at what will happen on the day of judgment:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَا لِهَذَا
الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا
يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا {49}

And the Book shall be placed, then you will see the guilty fearing from what is in it, and they will say: Ah! woe to us! what a book is this! it does not omit a small one nor a great one, but numbers them (all); and what they had done they shall find present (there); and your Lord does not deal unjustly with anyone.

Allah has made everything so clear for us and yet we keep on denying the reality:

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا
{54}

And certainly We have explained in this Quran every kind of example, and man is most of all given to contention.

Next we find the most interesting story of Musa (a.s) who goes in search of his teacher, Khizar (a.s) And then they travel together for a time, in which, through various incidents, Allah teaches us a very important lesson that if we cannot understand the wisdom behind anything that happens in our life then its is not due to any deficiency in Allah's laws. Rather the deficiency is in our own understanding. We need to believe that whatever happens is for our own benefit. We should not be deceived by the outward appearance of things.

Then there is the story of Zulqarnain which bears a great relevance for us in this day. He was a great ruler, who had been given marvelous resources and a mighty power,

إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا {84}

Surely We established him in the land and granted him means of access to every thing.

But see how he harnessed that power, with humility to Allah. That is the meaning of Tauheed that even if we have been given power, we should not let that power blind us. When Zulqarnain came upon a people who wanted him to help them against their enemies by building a wall for their protection, they offered to pay him tax for it:

قَالُوا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ
خَرْجًا عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا {94}

They said: O Zulqarnain! surely Gog and Magog make mischief in the land. Shall we then pay you a tribute on condition that you should raise a barrier between us and them

Look at his reply:

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّي فِيهِ رَبِّي خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا {95}

He said: That in which my Lord has established me is better, therefore you only help me with workers, I will make a fortified barrier between you and them;

He doesn't exploit them. Can we imagine any superpower giving free aid to any country that needed their help? Look at the technology that he's harnessed:

آتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا
قَالَ آتُونِي أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قَطْرًا {96}

Bring me blocks of iron; until when he had filled up the space between the two mountain sides, he said: Blow, until when he had made it (as) fire, he said: Bring me molten brass which I may pour over it.

فَمَا اسْطَاعُوا أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا {97}

So they were not able to scale it nor could they make a hole in it.

And look at his magnificent statement:

قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا
{98}

He said: This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the promise of my Lord comes to pass He will make it level with the ground, and the promise of my Lord is ever true.

Look at how he gives all the credit to Allah and remembers the day of Qiyamah even at the peak of his worldly success. This should be the attitude of a true believer. And now compare it with our own attitude how dazzled we are at the tall sky scrapers and we think that these people have really made it and nothing can beat them. Allah is teaching us here that Islam doesn't mean that all of us should go and sleep in a cave. Rather we face various situations in life and Allah gives different tests to different people. Some are tested with poverty and some are tested with power and status. Some are tested with loneliness and fear and others might be tested through interaction with crowds of people. Our success lies in our total submission to Allah's will in whatever circumstances we come up with. Likewise Allah has

bestowed each one of us with unique powers of personality. But we should not let this power make us arrogant or forgetful of Allah. Rather we should think of it as a gift from Allah and use it for His pleasure.

The ultimate success or failure is not in this world but the Hereafter. Allah says "should I tell you, who are the losers?" :

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا {103}

Say: Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds?

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا
{104}

(These are) they whose labor is lost in this world's life and they think that they are well versed in skill of the work of hands.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ وَزَنًا {105}

These are they who disbelieve in the communications of their Lord and His meeting, so their deeds become null, and therefore We will not set up a balance for them on the day of resurrection.

Their tragedy is that they were doing something but their motive was wrong, their priorities were wrong. What a waste of energies that they were serving the Humanity and not the creator of this humanity.....they were just building grand monuments to be remembered by people. All their efforts were for the pleasure of this world, a better job, a better house, a better car, and that's all it's about. And Allah will not give any weightage to these accomplishments.

The key point is the last Ayat in which Allah reminds us that our God is one God :

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ.....

Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one Allah.....

We need to be careful lest we are enslaved to people, to our spouses, to our children , our friends.....because anyone for whose sake we are disobeying Allah, we are his slave.....let there be no doubt about that. Whether it's some person or material possessions or benefits.

But how can we change life long attitudes? By thinking about and planning for the hereafter. That is the key point. We cannot do anything unless we believe in meeting with our Lord. This concept is the real driving force we need. So Allah says:

.....فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا {110}

.....therefore whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join any one in the service of his Lord.

Surah Al-Qadr

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

If we were to determine a single moment of time in the history of the world, which had the greatest impact on the destiny of mankind... it would be none other than the night of power, and the night of destiny in which the magnificent Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w)...

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ {1}

Surely We have revealed this (*Qur'an*) in the night of Qadr.

No place or time is special in itself but it is honoured because of the event that takes place in it. Although we seek the blessings of this special night every year in Ramadan, yet most of us remain involved with just the rituals and don't really understand the actual value of this night...

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ {2}

And what will make you understand, what the night of Qadr is!

It was a night in which the most perfect of guidance was revealed from Allah, which would not only affect its direct recipients, rather it would change the destiny of people till the end of time... but if we neglect this gift and don't realize its value then what can be our value as individuals and as a nation?

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ {3}

The night of Qadr is better than one thousand months.

Imagine the blessings of Allah on such a person who spends the night of power talking to Allah and asking his forgiveness and mercy. For such people the angels descend from the heavens...

تَنْزَلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ {4}

The angels and the Spirit (*Gabriel*) come down with every decree, by the leave of their Rabb

I think that more than anything else, this night is a great gift from Allah which he sends to us every year, to attain unimaginable rewards of worship and also more importantly it is a yearly reminder for us to contemplate and ponder on our position on earth...

We should ask ourselves why were we given this great gift of Quran? Why did Allah select us to be its inheritors? What is our responsibility towards it? Is the title of "the best nation" just to feel honoured and self satisfied?

So this Ramadan, we should make it our goal that as we stand before Allah in prayers, seeking this blessed night, we should focus on our responsibilities and ask Allah to help us in fulfilling our role on this earth... and the first and foremost responsibility that we have today is to open the gift which Allah preserved for us for all these centuries so that it has reached our hands in exactly the same condition in which it was received by our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him)

The great Quran is here to change our destiny but we have to understand it and act upon it... and spread its message to the whole world. This is the only way to peace and success...

سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ {5}

That night is the night of Peace, till the break of dawn.

Allah wants peace for us not just for this life but forever and ever... but he has given us a choice to test us who really, really wants it and works to achieve it.

Surah Al-A'la

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allah with His beautiful names:

Its first dose is to glorify

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى {1}

Glorify the name of your Rabb, the Most High

The first step towards healing is peace and so we should bring peace into our hearts with Allah's remembrance. Secondly we should take out some time from our busy schedules in which to contemplate on His creation because it increases our love for the Creator who not only made everything in perfect balance but also guided it:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى {2} وَالَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى {3}

Who has created all things and perfected them. Who has set their destinies and guided them

These words remind us of a very important fact that just as Allah guided my eyes to see, my ears to hear... similarly He will guide my heart to follow the complete truth... But he gives this guidance to those who ask for it, who really and truly yearn for it and prove their desire by their acts of righteousness. There is so much in this world to see and use but none of these things is permanent... every climax has an anti-climax; as is evident in the next ayahs:

وَالَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعَى {4} فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاءً أَحْوَى {5}

Who brings forth green pasture, then reduces it to black rubbish.

Only one thing is permanent and that is the word of Allah. This is never going to change in any way at all. Allah has promised to preserve the Quran in its original form forever and ever. The first proof of this preservation was that our Prophet (s.a.w) used to retain each and every word as it was revealed to Him; and afterwards when He used to recite it to His companions, they also memorised it word to word:

سُنْفِرُوكَ فَلَا تَنْسَى {6}

Soon We shall make you recite *Our revelations* so you shall forget none of them.

This was Allah's promise to His Messenger (s.a.w) that even though the path of righteousness is full of thorns, yet Allah will make it easy for Him:

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَى {8}

We shall make it easy for you to follow the easy way.

Although these assurances were being directed to the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) yet the Quran is for all mankind... so we should also have this firm hope in our hearts that if we stay committed to the true way of life then Allah will make it easy for us. There are two ways to achieve this ease... one is to do something consistently and sincerely. The more you tread on a path, the less difficult it seems... practise makes perfect!! Secondly you should share your ideas with others... Help others to make the right choices in their lives:

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى {9}

Therefore remind (others), surely reminder does benefit.

Sometimes it happens that your advice is very good and sincere but your way of conveying it is not effective. Most people then blame others and feel frustrated. Finally they give up saying "what is the use of telling others when they don't even listen to me". Here Allah is assuring us that giving good advice to others is *always* beneficial... even if others don't listen to you, remember that the most attentive listener is your own heart and it will surely benefit from the good words... But the basic ingredient which makes our deeds effective is fear of Allah, fear of consequences...

سَيَذَكَّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى {10}

He who fears *Allah* will heed the reminder.

No matter how beneficial something might be, there will always be those who remain deprived of it... simply because their hearts and minds have become blind to their own destruction:

وَيَتَخَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى {11} الَّذِي يَصْلَى النَّارَ الْكُبْرَى {12}

And he who is unfortunate will avoid *the reminder*; the one *who* shall burn in the gigantic fire.

Imagine the fire of hell... it is seventy times more severe than the fire which we see in this world. Can we even bear to be close to it? So what will be the state of a person who will be burning in that unimaginably hot furnace... even death will not come for his rescue:

لَمْ يَلَمْ يَمُوتْ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى {13}

Where he shall neither die nor live.

The only thing which can make us remove our bad habits and sins, is to think of ourselves in this situation. Because if we think we are not likely to fall in this category then there can be no hope for any self analysis or self improvement... which are the keys of success:

فَإِذَا فَلَاحٌ مِّن تَزَكَّى {14}

The one *who will take admonition and purify himself* shall be successful.

Since there can be no *Falah* or success without *Tazkiyah* or self purification; we should understand in clear terms what it actually means. Basically it means that you analyze your characteristics and get rid of the bad habits and replace them with good ones. And then two more ingredients:

وَدَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّى {15}

Who remembers the name of his Rabb and prays.

Apparently it looks so "do-able" but then surely there must be some hidden problem due to which so few people seem to come even close to this kind of piety... So what is stopping us from self purification? Is Allah's remembrance really difficult? Can we not read our salah regularly and on time? What is the hindrance?

بَلْ تُؤْتِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا {16}

But *O men!* You prefer the life of this world.

This is the reason behind every evil... the root cause of all our diseases of hearts... the love for instant benefits is so great that it covers the intellect and so we forget that our real benefit will be in the real life.... which will be so much better and everlasting...

وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى {17}

While the Hereafter is better and everlasting.

The concept of the hereafter is present in all religions because all the teachings were basically from Allah even though later on people distorted these facts by adding their own philosophies in it... but these teachings are present in all books:

إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَى {18} صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى {19}

Surely the same was said in the earlier scriptures; the scriptures of Ibrāhīm (*Abraham*) and Musa (*Moses*).

So basically this surah triggers our hearts towards the greater success of the hereafter and it is so obvious that if you plan for a big success then the achievements of this world will also come to you as an additional bonus from Allah... but if you trade your big investment for small, petty gains of this world then that is all you will get... and nothing more. The choice is ours and help is all from Allah... May He enable us to reap the maximum benefit from our lives and save us from failure and destruction... ameen

Surah Al-Hadid

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We are so much involved with the immediate pleasures of this world that we have no thought or time to do something for the Akhirah. How can we come out of this weakness? Is there any solution? Obviously what we need is a strong faith in Allah and Akhirah but the question is how to develop this strength of faith? Today when I studied Surah Al-Hadid I was so amazed to discover the answers to these questions that I feel like I have been given a treasure which I must share with everyone!!

Mainly there are two points on which we have to focus....one is to contemplate in Allah's creation, power and attributes and secondly we need to connect deeply with Allah through spending in His way whatever resources He has given us. It does not only mean our wealth but also our time and energies, our talents and capabilities and everything that we have. The more we spend for Allah the more we will be connected to Him and thus we can experience the sweetness of faith which is a delight known only to those who have sold their souls to Allah in exchange for Paradise.

So first of all look at the earth and the sky and imagine all the stars and galaxies and also the hidden treasures inside the earth and the oceans....All of this creation is a sign of Allah's greatness and perfection...

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ {1}

All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise

How can we be impressed by anyone other than Allah when none is so awesome like Him:

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ {2}

To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; it is He Who gives life and causes death; and He has power over all things.

And in the third verse we find the qualities of Allah which even our intellects cannot grasp fully....the beginning and the end...encompassing all time...So visible in all His creations and yet invisible...the one with absolute knowledge of each and everything....is there anyone like Him?

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ {3}

He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent, and He has the knowledge of all things

The more we contemplate on the amazing powers of Allah the more will our hearts be tuned to Him and only then will we get the desire to seek His pleasure. This is not an overnight process but gradually the idols of our hearts will be broken and replaced with the love of this All-Mighty All-Powerful Allah who has not left us alone in this big world but sent us His guidance, leading us out of darkness into the brilliant light...

هُوَ الَّذِي يُنَزِّلُ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُمْ لَسَرُوفٌ

رَحِيمٌ {9}

He it is who sends clear revelations to His servant, so that he may lead you from the depths of darkness into the light. Surely Allah is Most Kind and Most Merciful to you.

Belief in Allah and desire to please Him are the greatest forces on earth and they are strengthened by contemplating on the guidance that He revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) in the form of Quran and Sunnah. The more we read it the more it will open our hearts and our eyes will begin to see the truth; and so the illusion of this world will be replaced by the desire to attain the highest levels of Paradise.

Faith is not a stagnant emotion, rather it keeps moving between various levels. Therefore we need to refresh it regularly by spending in the way of Allah. Spending our wealth, our time, our energies and other resources for His sake, is a great way to attain Allah's pleasure, and when Allah is pleased with us He blesses us with a special kind of happiness and tranquillity which we cannot have with any other thing of this world. The rewards are endless as Allah calls this a "loan" which he will repay in both the worlds:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ {11}

Who is the one that will give to Allah a goodly loan, so that He may increase it manifold to his credit and give him a liberal reward besides it?

We mostly think of the success and pleasure of this world only but the next ayat is so beautiful and so vivid that it almost takes us into that other world when we will all be crossing over the bridge over hell fire. It will be in pitch black darkness except for the light of our deeds. The more we spread goodness in this world, the more will be that light. Just feel the amazing power of Allah's words:

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرَاكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ

تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ {12}

On the *Day of Judgment* you shall see the true believing men and the believing women, with their light shining before them and on their right hands, *and it will be said to them:* "Rejoice today, you shall enter the gardens beneath which rivers flow, in which you shall live forever, and that is the highest achievement."

Those who love Allah as their most perfect ideal and believe in His true Guidance cannot live a carefree life. All the time they have this consciousness that this world is filled with good and bad things and they have to exercise a lot of self control in staying away from the things which might anger Allah, even though at the moment they might seem to be very attractive and full of fun and enjoyment. On top of it there are the people who are indulging in all these pleasures hardly caring for Halal or Haram. They call themselves believers but in their hearts is the disease of Hypocrisy. They will not only do wrong things but will also criticize and make fun of the believers. Apparently they seem to be having such a fine time but look at their position on that day of truth; when they will be literally begging for some light:

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ
فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِسُورٍ لَهُ بَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِنْ قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ { 13 }

On that Day the hypocrite men and hypocrite women will say to the true believers: "Wait for us, that we may borrow some of your light." But they will be told: "Go away! Seek your light elsewhere." So a wall with a gate shall be set up between them. Inside there shall be mercy, and outside all along there shall be punishment of hell.

They will not be able to understand how can this be happening to them...so they will make another appeal..."were we not with you...were we not Muslims? Living in the same houses, working in the same places?" But reality will be put before them which they will not be able to deny:

يُنَادُونَهُمْ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْأَمَانِيُّ حَتَّىٰ
جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللَّهِ الْعُرُورُ { 14 }

They will call out to the believers, saying: "Were we not on your side?" "Yes," they will reply, "but you led yourselves into temptation, you wavered, you doubted, and were deceived by your vain desires until Allah's command came, while the arch-deceiver (*shaitan*) deceived you concerning Allah till the last moment."

When I talk to people about having true belief and adhering to Allah's laws, I often get the standard response that all people are good and it is their own opinion or interpretation of truth according to which they are living....so we should not be critical or judgmental. But I tell them that in the Quran Allah has himself described different characters among people.... making it very clear who is acceptable to Him and who is not. This is not so that we point out towards people and declare them to be "bad" but the purpose is to make us understand what kind of life we should be living if we really want to have a good end in the hereafter. Therefore when Allah is pointing out the fatal errors of the hypocrites it is a warning to us that we should avoid this attitude at all costs...Here is the list from the above Ayat and it is like a mirror in which each one of us should find where he stands:

1- The hypocrites did not avoid situations where they were likely to disobey Allah

(Do I avoid such company and environment where I will be tempted to go beyond the righteous limits?)

2- They were always waiting for everyone else to reform first

(When I know about a command of Allah, do I start acting on it or keep waiting?)

3- They remained in doubt about Allah and His religion

(Do I take care to strengthen my faith by reading and contemplating on Quran and Hadith? And also by spending in the way of Allah?)

4- They were deceived by their desires

(Do I follow my desires blindly? Or do I stop and evaluate whether it will earn me Allah's pleasure or anger?)

5- They allowed themselves to be deceived by the shaitan

(Do I regularly seek Allah's protection against this enemy? Do I take steps of protecting my heart from his whispers by constantly remembering Allah?)

Why is it so important to straighten up our lives? Because if remain carefree and don't turn to Allah then there will come a time when no amount of money can save us from the prison of hell:

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَلَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَأْوَاكُمُ النَّارُ هِيَ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ {15}

They will be told, "Today no ransom shall be accepted from you, or from the unbelievers. Your abode is the fire: which you have justly earned, and it is an evil refuge."

Normally we hear such warnings and pass them by with hardly a thought. It is because when we start taking a blessing for granted then we lose the feeling of fulfillment or the sense of responsibility attached with it. Allah gave us this glorious Quran but we have not recognized its worth. That is what Allah is warning us about in the next ayat:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ {16}

Has not the time arrived for the believers to submit with fervent hearts to Allah's warning and to the truth He has revealed, so that they may not become like those

who were given the Book before this, *even though* their term was prolonged for them but their hearts became hardened? Today most among them are transgressors.

What if our hearts have already gone into a state of hardness? How to soften them? Allah has the remedy to all problems:

إِنَّ الْمُصَّدِّقِينَ وَالْمُصَّدَّقَاتِ وَأَقْرَضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَاعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ {18}

Surely the charitable men and the charitable women, and those who give a goodly loan to Allah, shall be repaid manifold, and also be given a liberal reward besides it.

But again the greatest thing is faith and conviction!! Look at these beautiful words of Allah which distinguish between belief and disbelief in such open words...

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ وَالشَّهَدَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ {19}

Those who believe in Allah and His Rasool, they are the truthful and the true witnesses in the sight of their Rabb; they shall have their reward and their light. But those who disbelieve and reject our revelations; they shall be the inmates of hellfire.

If faith is such a beautiful and desirable thing then why don't we make it our ideal and our goal in life? The fact is that Allah created this world in order to provide for our various requirements but we went a step further and declared it to be our purpose and our goal. This is the deception which leads us away from our real targets. Therefore Allah is making an announcement here which should move our hearts....if only we could hear:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ زِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَحْبَبَ الْكُفَّارَ تَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيحُ فَتَرَاهُ مُضْفَرًا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ {20}

You should know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, a show and boasting among yourselves, a quest for greater riches and more children. Its similitude is that of vegetation that flourishes after rain: the growth of which delights

the tillers, then it withers and you see it turn yellow, soon it becomes dry and crumbles away. In the hereafter there will be either severe punishment or forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure. The life of this world is nothing but an illusion

Sometimes you will hear people say that does Allah want us to leave the world and live in jungles? Of course not! He made the world and gave us life so that we should use its resources to seek His pleasure and a way to Paradise which He has prepared for those who have understood this life to be a test and they do their utmost struggle to be the winners...so don't waste life in doubts and useless debates but run for that great reward of paradise..

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ {21}

Race towards forgiveness of your Rabb and for the paradise which is as vast as the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Rasools. Such is the grace of Allah, which He bestows on whom He pleases, and Allah is the Owner of mighty grace.

Just see how Allah has provided us with so many resources both physical and spiritual....the guidance which keeps us on the straight path and the powerful element...iron:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ
بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ {25}

Surely we sent Our Rasools with clear signs, and sent down with them the Book and the Scales of Justice, so that men may conduct themselves with fairness. We also sent down Iron, with its mighty strength and diverse uses for mankind, so that Allah may know those who will help Him, though unseen, and help His Rasools. Surely Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.

And just as we need the power of iron in the physical aspect of our life, similarly we cannot survive without the power of spiritual guidance which Allah revealed on His messengers:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ فَمِنْهُمْ مُهْتَدٍ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

{26}

We sent Nuh (*Noah*) and Ibrahim (*Abraham*), and bestowed among their descendants Prophethood and the Book. Some of them adopted the right guidance, but most of them were transgressors.

Therefore the thing to do is to develop a bond with our Lord, a belief in His presence, in His love, His Mercy, His anger, His rewards and His punishment...because only if we live with this consciousness can we avoid to fall into the traps of the devil and the illusion of our desires...

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ

وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ {28}

O believers! Fear Allah and believe in His Rasool (*Muhammad, peace be upon him*). He will grant you a double share of His mercy, provide for you a light to walk with and forgive you your sins. Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful

Allah is calling us....

Will we not listen to Him?

Will we not obey?

Surah Ad-Dahr

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Alhamdulillah today after studying it I feel like Allah has answered all my questions regarding life and its mysteries. I understood that we feel lost because we keep looking for guidance from people. And we don't realize that only Allah has the complete knowledge and only He has the ability to make us see things from the right perspective. To understand life we must understand how and why it all began...

هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا {1}

Has there not passed over man a period of time when he was nothing- -not even mentioned?

Try to imagine what the world would be like if there was not a single person in it... empty houses, empty roads, no human voices, no traffic, nothing... How meaningless it would be without human beings... therefore it is such a big truth that Allah created everything for us... but what have *we* been created for? Allah answers in the next ayah:

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا {2}

Indeed, We have created man from the sperm drop *containing both sexes*, so that We may test him. *Therefore*, We gave him the faculties of hearing and sight.

So life is a test... we keep hearing this sentence but rarely does anyone ask... what is the subject of this test? What is the syllabus? What type of questions will be asked?

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا {3}

Then We guided him to the Way: Now, *it is his choice* either to be grateful or to be a disbeliever.

The syllabus for our test has come straight from the heavens. Allah sent us the complete guide in the form of Quran. He sent us the most perfect teacher, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) who not only taught us the Quran but also taught us the wisdom to apply it in our lives. So now it is up to us whether we are grateful or ungrateful. If we appreciate life, acknowledge with our words and deeds that everything that we have has been given to us by Allah so it should be used according to His will and Desire, then we have passed this test; otherwise there is a terrible end...

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا {4}

For the disbelievers, We have prepared chains, fetters and a blazing fire.

Sometimes paradise seems an impossible target but this Surah has given me such a hope and encouragement that it is not so difficult to achieve... the only thing we need to get there is to be grateful... Being grateful means that you have a positive attitude... you recognize that Allah had given you so much that you cannot even count. So you will try to win His pleasure with goodness and excellence in all that you do... such will be the fortunate people:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا {5} عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا

{6}

The righteous shall be *in paradise* drinking from a cup of wine mixed with Kafoor (*camphor-water*), from a gushing spring at which the servants of Allah will refresh themselves, and *shall be able to* take out its channels from place to place *at their will*.

The most prized quality of grateful people is that they fulfil their commitments and fear the day of Judgement:

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا {7}

They are those who keep their vows and dread the Day of widespread terror

The Arabic word for a vow is "Nazr". This means that a person makes some commitment with Allah to do some extra deeds. Nazr is defined as making something obligatory on

oneself which is not otherwise an obligation. There reason to do so is to gain pleasure and nearness of Allah; because being humans we tend to make a lot of mistakes and the only way we can hope to wash away the effects of these mistakes is to do replace them with lots of extra good deeds. But just making intention is not enough because after the initial burst of motivation our efforts tend to fade off. So we should make commitments with Allah, not only for extra salah or fasting but also of other deeds of goodness... some for our personal development like education of Quran and Hadith and other targets of helping people:

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا {8}

And they feed the poor, the orphan and the captive for the love of Allah

But all along this road to success we need to keep looking at our compass, the tool which tells us where we are going. In the journey of life, our compass is the intention of our hearts... the motivating factor. It is human weakness that we want instant recognition and appreciation from people but we can correct this habit by reminding ourselves that our goal is to attain Allah's approval:

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا {9}

(They say): "We feed you for the sake of Allah Alone; we seek from you neither reward nor thanks

Awareness of the reality is such a great blessing of Allah and we should all pray and work hard to attain it through humbleness and acquiring knowledge. It is this awareness which motivates a person to do countless acts of generosity yet instead of becoming pleased with himself he keeps fearing His Lord...

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبَّنَا يَوْمًا عَبَّوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا {10}

Indeed we dread our Rabb's torment of a very distressful Day.

And this balance of gratitude and Allah's fear leads a person to ultimate success:

فَوَقَاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا {11}

So Allah will deliver them from the evil of that Day, and bestow on them freshness and joy

To be saved from the hellfire and to enter Paradise... this is the ultimate success:

وَجَزَاءُ مَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةٌ وَحَرِيرًا {12}

And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient.

No success comes without a price and the price of eternal happiness is Patience. We simply cannot do anything without patience and perseverance. Someone rightly said that patience and gratitude are two wings and we can fly to Jannat if both these wings remain strong. If one of them is cut off our flight will be in serious danger... It might seem hard to swallow the unpleasant things of this life with patience but just see how much reward there is awaiting those who decide to do it:

مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلَا زَمْهَرِيرًا {13}

There they shall be reclining upon high couches; they shall feel neither the scorching heat nor the biting cold

It brings to mind such a delightful picture... complete serenity and freedom from all highs and lows... no more burning sun... no more freezing cold; just relax and enjoy the pleasures of Paradise:

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلَّتْ أَسْفُلُهَا تَنْزِيلًا {14}

The trees of paradise will spread their shade around them, and their fruits will hang in clusters within their easy reach.

This is probably the only Surah in Quran where we find such a vivid description of Jannah. Reading such words increases our love for Allah even more, for all His detailed preparations and also for telling us in advance... so that we can work even harder to achieve it and bear the loneliness and hardships of this way in happiness of anticipation:

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِآنِيَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا {15} قَوَارِيرٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ قَدَرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا

{16}

They shall be served with silver dishes, goblets of crystal, and goblets made of crystal-clear silver, filled *by their attendants* in due measure.

There will be such honours given to the successful people which we cannot even imagine:

عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٌ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّوا أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا {21}

They (*the residents of paradise*) shall be arrayed in the garments of fine green silk and rich brocade, and adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Rabb will give them pure wine to drink.

Why is all this being given to them? Because they sought Allah's appreciation and so Allah will give them what they strived for:

إِن هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا {22}

"Verily this is a Reward for you, and your Endeavour is accepted and recognised."

Whenever I imagine the long road to Paradise, the ultimate pleasure I visualize is that Allah will say "your efforts have been appreciated". This longing to hear these words from Allah is the greatest motivating force in the world. It makes every other thing secondary... people's pleasure, their approval, their criticism, their hurts... everything just fades away. But to strengthen this vision you need to keep looking outside the window of this temporary world into the infinity of the hereafter... And do you know where I found such a window? It is the Quran...

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا {23}

Surely, it is We Who have sent down this Qur'an to you through gradual revelations,

But these days, even to reach this "window" requires a lot of patience and determination; because lots of evil forces are there to stop your way. That is why Allah says:

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آتِمًا أَوْ كَافِرًا {24}

Therefore, await with patience the command of your Rabb and do not yield to any sinner or disbeliever.

But we need strength even to do Sabar... where will get that strength from?

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا {25} وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا {26}

Glorify the name of your Rabb morning and evening; prostrate before Him at night and glorify Him during the long hours of night.

So Allah has made it so easy for us... go to him in Salah and get the energy to do sabar. Do sabar and get the rewards of paradise... then why are so few people willing to walk this way? What is stopping them?

إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَيَذُرُونَ وَرَاءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيلًا {27}

These people love the transitory life *of this world* and neglect the heavy Day *that is coming ahead*.

So we need to cut down on all trivial things which keep us addicted to the concerns of this world. This world is our necessity not our purpose... it is a way, not a destination. We can enjoy the scenes on the way but we don't fall in love with them so much that we get off our train and start living there, forgetting our actual destination. But again only Allah has the power to reveal the reality to us... therefore hold tight to His words:

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا {29}

This is indeed an admonition, so let him who will, adopt The Way to his Rabb

So if you are a fortunate person already on the way of your Lord remember that one big trap of the devil is that he will try to make you arrogant... so Allah reminds you that there is no reason for you to feel proud of yourself because you could not be on the right way if he had not guided you:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {30}

But you cannot will, except by the will of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Knowledgeable, All-Wise.

Therefore we should just keep on doing our best and stay away from all self praising thoughts, words and deeds... patience and gratitude should be our motto and keep praying for Allah's help and Mercy:

يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ وَالظَّالِمِينَ أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا {31}

He admits to His mercy whom He wills, and for the wrongdoers He has prepared a painful punishment.

Such a beautiful end to a heart moving surah! May this end be the start of a new awareness and a new energy and resolve to be the best slaves of Allah... humble, patient and grateful...

forever turning to him in hope and fear... seeking His pleasure and working day and night towards this goal... InshaAllah